

they've got to stop funding terrorist organizations such as Hizballah that create great dangers in parts of the world.

No, this has been an issue that I have been concerned about ever since I've been the President. As to direct connections with September the 11th, we're digging into the facts to determine if there was one.

Chile's Role in Haiti

Q. —from Chile. What do you think about the role that Chile is playing in the reconstruction in Haiti and as observer of the political referendum in Venezuela?

President Bush. Listen, the Chilean response in Haiti was rapid and important. President Lagos is a decisive man, and when he saw a problem, he went to the people of Chile and explained the problem and responded. And I want to thank him for that. It was—Chile is making a very important contribution to the stability and, hopefully, the prosperity of Haiti. And we spent a lot of time talking about, today, about how the United States can continue to not only stay involved but to help. And I find it very interesting that the United Nations is sending a very distinguished citizen from Chile to Haiti to help stabilize that country so the people of Haiti have a chance to live a hopeful life.

And that's going to require security measures, and as the President mentioned—I think you said in Spanish—there's a donors conference tomorrow—it's a very important conference, and that we will be attending, along with Chile, to see

if we can't set priorities for the people of Haiti* so they have a chance to live a good life.

And the second part of the question was?

Chile's Role in the Venezuela Referendum

President Lagos. Venezuela.

Q. About political referendum—

President Bush. Oh, Venezuela, yes, again, this is a—Chile plays a very important role in our neighborhood, and the referendum in Venezuela is an important referendum. And the referendum must be conducted in a honest and open way. And the influence of President Lagos is a very important influence, because he has made it clear that for the credibility of the current Government, they must welcome observers, they must encourage observers, and they must not interfere with the process, so that the people of Venezuela have a chance to express their opinion without fear of reprisal.

And so again, I want to thank my friend Ricardo Lagos for playing a very constructive role.

Thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:01 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to John E. McLaughlin, Acting Director of Central Intelligence; and Juan Gabriel Valdes, U.N. Special Representative and head of the U.N. Mission in Haiti. A reporter referred to Chilean Senator Augusto Pinochet, former President of Chile.

Remarks Following Discussions With Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad bin Badawi of Malaysia

July 19, 2004

President Bush. We'll have just two statements. Mr. Prime Minister, welcome.

Prime Minister Abdullah. Thank you very much.

* White House correction.

President Bush. We just had a very wide-ranging discussion. I appreciate the Prime Minister's friendship. I want to thank him for his leadership. I want to thank him for the cooperation on counterterrorism efforts.

We talked about how we can work together to improve the economic condition of both our countries, as well as the Middle East. He had some very interesting suggestions about the Middle East. We talked about the Israeli-Palestinian issue, and I assured him I am fully committed to the development of a Palestinian state that can live side by side with Israel in peace.

We talked about Iraq, and I told him I was pleased with the progress being made in Iraq. And the Prime Minister had some helpful suggestions. So, all in all, it's been a very constructive meeting.

I was pleased to hear that there are 7,000 Malaysian students in U.S. schools, and I think that's a constructive sign, Mr. Prime Minister. And I wish them all the best, and I know they'll be treated well here in the United States.

So welcome, sir.

Prime Minister Abdullah. Thank you very much, Mr. President, for accepting me to come here to call on you in spite of your very busy schedule.

But I would like to say this, that our bilateral relation between the United States and Malaysia is certainly very strong. You cannot judge our bilateral relations simply on the basis of what you hear—that we may have some differences on Iraq or on Palestine. But the foundation of the bilateral relation has remained strong all the time. And our economic cooperation is excellent, I must say, and our education pro-

grams, and we have some other cooperation in defense and many areas of cooperation, which has made our relation with the United States—our relation is very, very, very strong.

And we believe—and I believe that more can be done, and we have already improved a lot. And today I have this assurance from the President, himself. And I am certainly grateful you have been able to explain to me so many aspects of the issues pertaining to Palestine and Israel. There's nothing better than to get from the President of the United States, himself, on all these issues because he is very much involved. And management of all these problems and issues relating to this Palestine and Israel and so—other issues too.

And we talked about Islam, and we believe that the Muslim countries can be helped to better understanding the unique capacity-building. And we are also trying to do whatever we can. I think this capacity-building can help to reduce poverty, the condition of poverty, and with that, deprive the terrorists of their own agenda to hijack these people, and to support them.

And at the same time, I'd like just to tell you that Malaysia is ready to send a medical team, a sizable medical team to Iraq.

President Bush. That's great. Thank you.

Prime Minister Abdullah. And we hope to be able to also participate in reconstruction of Iraq and do whatever job we can to help.

President Bush. Thank you, sir.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:39 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Remarks in a Discussion at Kirkwood Community College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa

July 20, 2004

The President. Thank you all very much. Please be seated.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. Thank you all. Thanks for coming. Thank you all for coming. Thanks for being here. That's what I'm here to tell you: I'm ready to serve this Nation for 4 more years. And I've got a reason. I've got a reason. I want to continue to make this a safer and stronger and better place for every citizen.

We've got a little different format today. It's an opportunity for me to interface with some of your citizens about why I've done some of the policies that I've done, give them a chance to explain to you how these policies might have helped. Oh, I know, you're probably here thinking I'm going to spend most of the time attacking my opponent. I've got too much good to talk about.

It's very important for the people of this important State to know that we're going to carry the State of Iowa. And I need your help. Listen, there's a place you can go on the web page—I mean, on the Internet called georgewbush.com. And you need to get on there if you want to figure out how to help. So you can get on there, and you can register to vote, or you can figure out ways to help people register to vote, or you can sign up to work in your neighborhood. And that's what I'm here to ask you to do, because we've got a plan to make sure this country is a better place. And I want your help to convincing people from all walks of life, Republicans and discerning Democrats and wise independents.

I am sorry that Laura is not with us.

Audience members. Aw-w-w!

The President. That's generally the reaction. [Laughter] It's kind of like, "I wish she'd come and you'd have stayed at home." [Laughter] Fortunately, however,

our two daughters came today, and I'm proud—I'm really glad they're on the campaign trail with me. It's makes the days a little shorter and the trips a lot more fun.

I want to thank the good people here at this wonderful community college. Norm, I want to thank you. Thanks for having me, Norm, here at Kirkwood. I'm going to talk a little bit about community colleges. They're an integral part of making sure America's future is hopeful, as we want it to be. Thanks for opening it up. It's not easy to host the President. [Laughter]

I appreciate the mayor; Mayor Paul Pate from Cedar Rapids is with us today. Thanks for coming, Mayor. I know Chuck Gipp is here. I want to thank Chuck for coming as well, the majority leader of the house of representatives. I want to thank all the other State and local officials. Most of all, I want to thank you all. I want to thank you all.

It's very important—it's very important for the people of this country to understand the stakes that we're confronted with, to understand the challenges we face. The enemy declared war on us, and you've just got to know, nobody wants to be the war President. I want to be the peace President. I want to be the President that after 4 years, 4 more in this office, I want people to look back and say, "The world is a more peaceful place. America is a safer country." Four more years, and America will be safer and the world will be more peaceful.

But in this world, you just can't hope for the best; you have to lead. You have to make the hard decisions to make sure America is a safer place and the world is a more peaceful place.

It's very important never to forget the lessons of that fateful day which changed